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BY THE SENATE,

FEBRUARY 15th, 1867.

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# PETITION

OF

“Working Men” of Baltimore City,

ASKING A MODIFICATION OF THE

# SUNDAY LAW,

TO THE

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

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ANNAPOLIS:  
HENRY A. LUCAS, PRINTER.

1867.

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## P E T I T I O N .

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*To the General Assembly of Maryland :*

To all practical minds the advantages of a modification of the existing "Sunday Law" must be obvious. To the masses or working classes of the community the benefits to be derived are incalculable. The workingman's holiday is Sunday. 'Tis indeed his day of rest, relaxation from toil, his few hours for enjoyment and repose ; but since the introduction into our State of the "*Connecticut Blue Laws*," his few privileges have been cut off. In making laws are we to think only of the comfort and convenience of the privileged classes ? Is the happiness and comfort of the working classes—the real bone and sinew of the country—to be entirely lost sight of ? Is the voice of one-third of the people sufficiently potent to reduce the other two-thirds to the position of the Russian serf, or the miserable and unfortunate creatures employed in the manufactories and coal mines of England, or the crushed and down-trodden peasantry of Ireland ? God forbid it. And *we*, the friends of the working classes, contend for a modification of the *very* stringent "Sunday Law" so recently enacted, and also the running of the street cars on Sunday. So far the results of the "Sunday Law" have proven inimical or subversive to "law and order." Let us now try an opposite course, a little more license, a little more indulgence. We have parks, gardens and places of resort generally, which during the week are visited by the privileged few, who have them of their own, or can afford to hire carriages. On Sunday *too*, these privileged few are whirled along to church in their luxuriously appointed establishments, animadverting upon and deploring with upturned eyes the dreadful wickedness of the "*common people*;" little imagining or dreaming how much of this real and seeming depravity is chargeable to themselves in their utter disregard for the comfort of the working classes. True, these godly and holy people go round and distribute tracts, and ask why the children do not come to Sunday School, &c. Let us

start the street cars and watch the effect; let the working classes ride to church too, if they feel like it. If the weather prove inclement and the children of the working man, as is not unfrequently the case, illy-protected against it, the cars afford protection to the feet and shelter to the head. Let the pale-faced and care-worn wife, and the toil worn husband have their ride to church, too, if they prefer it, and our own word for it, if this were the case, the Sabbath Schools and Churches would be well filled. The poor man's church (probably not a "West End" fashionable one) is remote; and it is not from native depravity or inborn wickedness he does not go to the house of God; but, as we have before said, the church is remote the weather perhaps too cold, too warm, or too wet. His comment is, the rich do not labor, and they have their carriages and horses to drive to church. I work and toil all the week, and on Sunday I must foot it to church. Sunday is a day of rest, and I will rest. Thus he reasons, and in time falls from grace, not from disinclination to serve God or act the part of a good and upright man, but from an indifference upon the part of his fellow-man to consider his comfort and convenience. He would go to church in the morning, and he would like in the afternoon, perhaps, to take his wife and children to the Park or Gardens, but there is no accommodation for the poor man and his family. It is very true the "Sunday Law" does not interfere with the livery stables, but the working man, with an income of from \$12 to \$15, or \$18 per week, cannot afford to pay from \$5 to \$8 and \$10 for a carriage. If the street cars were only running he might be able to take those puny pale faced little ones for a few hours into a purer, more healthful atmosphere, out of those small class rooms, and pent-up and densely populated streets and alleys, but, alas! for him and his family, he sits moodily brooding over "man's inhumanity to man," until, like Ishmael, he feels his "hand against every man and every man's hand against him." He would take his children to a confectioners for a few pennies worth of candy or cake, but the good christian law makers, who have plenty of money, and can go to a confectioner's every day in the week, say there must be no sale of confectionery on Sunday. He would like a cigar or a pipe of tobacco, but there again he is foiled. His wife would like a glass of soda water; it can't be had. His wife, or perhaps himself, from over-indulgence at the Sunday dinner, may have an attack of the cramp cholic, or cholera morbus, his child an attack of croup or spasms; he knows the remedy to apply, but he must first get a physicians prescription before the druggist can give him what he requires. "Sunday Law," like the handwriting on the wall, stares him in the face which ever way he turns, until he feels disposed, and perhaps does consign the 'Sunday Law' and law-makers to a very warm place. Let us have a modification of this

"Sunday Law." Let us have the street cars running on Sunday, for the comfort and convenience of our working classes, and thus secure the lasting friendship and gratitude of the working classes.

WORKING MEN.







